

REMARKS

In the Office Action mailed February 23, 2006, the Examiner noted that claims 1-16 were pending, objected to claims 3-8 and 14 and rejected claims 1, 2, 9-13 and 15-16. Claims 3-5, 7, 9-12, 14 and 15 have been amended, claims 1-2, 13 and 16 have been canceled, and, thus, in view of the forgoing claims 3-12 and 14-15 remain pending for reconsideration which is requested. No new matter has been added. The Examiner's rejections and objections are traversed below.

In the Action the Examiner objected to the drawings and a replacement drawing is provided. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

On page 2 the Examiner objected to claim 16 as being a substantial duplicate of claim 13. Claim 16 has been cancelled without prejudice. However, the Examiner is reminded that 35 USC section 112, paragraph 6 provides for a mandatory ("shall be construed") different interpretation of the scope of "means for" than for other types of claim recitations.

On page 3 the Examiner objected to various claims. These claims have been amended in view of the Examiners comments. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

On page 7 the Examiner objected to claims 3-8 and 14 and indicated that these claims would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 3 and 14 have been so rewritten (claims 4-8 depend from claim 3) and it is submitted that these claims have not been narrowed and have the same scope as prior to being made independent and are now allowable. Withdrawal of the objection is requested.

On page 4 of the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1, 2, 9-13, 15 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 102 as anticipated by Tanimoto. Claims 1, 2, 13 and 16 have been cancelled. Claims 9-12 depend from allowable claim 3 and claim 15 has been amended to include the features of allowable claim 14.

It is submitted that the present claimed invention patentably distinguishes over Tanimoto and withdrawal of the rejection is requested.

It is submitted that the claims are not taught, disclosed or suggested by the prior art. The claims are therefore in a condition suitable for allowance. An early Notice of Allowance is requested.

Serial No. 10/705,847

If any further fees, other than and except for the issue fee, are necessary with respect to this paper, the U.S.P.T.O. is requested to obtain the same from deposit account number 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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